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Embassy Despatch 919 of January 27, 1961

Jacobo TIMMERMAN Says Argentina Will Soon Break Relations with Cuba

Enclosed is a memorandum of conversation with Jacobo Timmerman, a keen observer of Argentine political affairs and a close collaborator on occasion to the Minera Aluminé group, a powerful business combine operating in the field of banking, construction, mining, housing, and transportation. Timmerman, who is also a confidant of Rogelio FRIGERIO, former Secretary to the President on Economic and Social Affairs, is a well-known newspaper man and radio commentator and has recently been appointed as a consultant to the NBC-affiliated Television Channel 9 here. Timmerman, who was formerly a political commentator for the afternoon daily, La Razón, was also instrumental in getting the Minera Aluminé group interested in purchasing the Editorial Haynes publishing house, publishers of many popular magazines and the newspaper El Mundo.

Timmerman told the reporting officer that he was shortly to leave for the United States where he was interested in filming a series of interviews with leading members of the Kennedy Administration. He said that after the programs are presented over Channel 9, they will be presented to USIS for distribution to other television stations.

For the Ambassador:

Irving W. Salert
First Secretary of Embassy

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said for the Peronists and for Perón, Frigerio was the best of the lot and, despite the fact that Frigerio was a highly controversial individual, there was a history of controversial people coming to power in Argentina. Perón was a good example of that.

Timmerman concluded his remarks by saying that Frigerio was not enthusiastic, to say the least, about the Kennedy Administration. He preferred the Republicans in power. "They are realists who understand the role that big business must perform." To his way of thinking, in order for Argentina to participate in the power play, she must first organize effectively her own power groupings within the Argentine economy. The Democratic administrations are too dedicated to "egghead theories, social progress and assistance for immediate social action programs." "We need," he said, speaking for the mind of Frigerio, "big business development in the fields of electric power, basic industry and transport. The Kennedy Administration is interested in housing, food for peace, etc."

The reporting officer pointed out that he did not believe that the present Administration in Washington would change its social philosophy or orientation simply to please the Frigerio school and that U.S. interests were also of major importance, not only to the government in Washington but also to the entire U.S. population.

Timmerman then said that he understood this but that Frigerio and his top team were really naive when it came to understanding the U.S. and its basic objectives, i.e., the struggle against Communist growth and penetration.

He then reiterated that the Frondizi Administration was dedicated to maintaining a close bond of friendship with the U.S. and the West in general, and that he was certain that the Argentine Government would shortly break off diplomatic relations with Cuba.